



The proposed West Beach Historic District includes properties roughly bounded by: West Cabrillo Boulevard on the south; Chapala on the east; Natoma and Yanonali Streets on the north; and Bath Street on the west (see larger map on page 3).

INTRODUCTION

The proposed West Beach Historic District represents Santa Barbara residential and tourist development along the waterfront from 1900 through 1950. The district has an important collection of Spanish Colonial Revival multi-family residential buildings and courtyard apartment buildings. A portion of the district includes the area known first as Burton Mound, a prehistoric settlement, and then known as the Ambassador Tract, occupied by the Potter Hotel until 1921. The land was subsequently subdivided for multi-family residential use. The district's contributing properties include residences, hotels/motels, and small commercial buildings. The district's predominant architectural style is Spanish Colonial Revival, with a few examples of other styles such as Arts and Crafts and Minimal Traditional.

Proposed West Beach Historic District



The deeply recessed windows, stucco walls and clay tile roof are features that define the Spanish Colonial style of this contributing historic resource in proposed West Beach district.

HISTORY

Period of significance: 1901-1953

Once the railroad connected Santa Barbara to San Francisco in 1901, tourists flocked to Santa Barbara, exposing a shortage of accommodations for wealthy travelers. As a result, Milo Potter built a five-story 600-room Mission Revival hotel on Burton Mound. The hotel's 36-acre grounds were lushly landscaped. It was a showplace and a popular hotel from its inception until it burned down in 1921.

Not only did the demise of the Potter Hotel leave a void of high-class tourist facilities along the ocean, but between 1920 and 1930, the population of Santa Barbara increased by over 50% with people lured by the climate and the prospect of employment. Consequently, West Beach became the center for smaller hotels/motels and cottages, apartment buildings, boarding houses, restaurants, bathhouses, and an amusement area.

During the same period, a concerted effort was made to make Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial Revival Santa Barbara's dominant architectural styles. The Spanish Colonial Revival architecture flourished in Santa Barbara from 1915 through the 1940s and the concentration of original examples of the style in West Beach represent a significant period of development in the City. The city became known for the smooth stucco walls, clay tile roofs and recessed, wood windows that the Spanish Colonial Revival exemplified in this proposed historic district.



Above: The unique collection of authentic Spanish Colonial Revival Architecture of the proposed West Beach historic district sets Santa Barbara apart from other coastal communities.